Digital Marketing: Necessity & Key Strategies To Succeed In Current Era

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Abstract: It cannot be denied that the world is rapidly shifting from analogue to digital. People are consuming more and more digital content on a daily basis and companies that have not yet recognized this in their marketing strategies need to adapt fast. More people spend more time online in India every year, and the digital tools and sites they use play an ever-growing role in their lives. Smart marketers keep on top of the scale of change and ensure their marketing strategies and their touch point mirrors where the consumer is spending their time. This paper begins with an introduction about Digital Marketing and it further highlights the present trends in Digital Marketing in India and discusses the necessity of using this strategy of marketing for the marketing of the product and services.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, consumer behavior, Digital India, Internet, Online purchasing, Online advertising.

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing is an umbrella term for the targeted, measurable, and interactive marketing of products or services using digital technologies to reach and convert leads into customers. The key objective is to promote brand image of the company, build more & more prospective customers and increase the sale of goods & services by adopting various digital marketing techniques which are available in today era.

Digital Marketing is the use of digital channels to promote or market products and services to consumers and businesses.

According to American Marketing Association, The performance of business activities which directs the flow of goods & services from manufacturer to consumers. In Present era, Manufacturers are using digital marketing as a tools to attract more & more untapped customers in urban area and rural area both.

The term ‘digital marketing’ was first used in the 1990s. In the 2000s and the 2010s, digital marketing became more sophisticated as an effective way to create a relationship with the consumer that has depth and relevance.

Digital Marketing is making use of various types of digital technologies to promote company business. There are many types of digital marketing. It is very important for company as a brand to understand what will and will not work in regards to their digital marketing efforts.

Digital marketing is often referred to as 'online marketing', 'internet marketing' or 'web marketing'. In simple terms, digital marketing is the promotion of products and services, brands via one or more forms of electronic medium. Our Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi focused more & more on digitalization process in our country so that with the using of the latest technology people of India enhance their living standards and connect in the global era.

Digital India has been also started with the aim to make the India totally digital so the various companies should focus on the digital marketing for the marketing of their product and services.

Digital Marketing Channel

Digital Marketing is facilitated by multiple channels, as an advertiser one's core objective is to find channels which result in maximum two way communication and a better overall return on investment (ROI) for the brand. There are multiple online marketing channels available namely:

1. Affiliate marketing
2. Display advertising
3. Email marketing
4. Search marketing
5. Social Media
6. Social Networking
7. Mobile Marketing

Digital marketing activities are search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), content marketing, influencer marketing, content automation, campaign marketing, and e-commerce marketing, social media marketing, social media optimization, e-mail direct marketing, display advertising, e-books, optical disks and games, and any other form of digital media. It also extends to non-Internet channels that provide digital media, such as mobile phones (SMS and MMS), callback and on-hold mobile ring tones.

Some of the key forms of it at present:
- Websites and SEO content
- Blogs
Digital marketing and its associated channels are important— but not to the exclusion of all else. It’s not enough to just know the customers; company must know them better than anybody else so company can communicate with them where, when and how they are most receptive to company message. To do that, company need a consolidated view of customer preferences and expectations across all channels— Web, social media, mobile, direct mail, point of sale, etc. Marketers can use this information to create and anticipate consistent, coordinated customer experiences that will move customers along in the buying cycle.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The digital revolution has impacted consumers and businesses alike. Over the past decade technology and the way it is used has changed drastically. The Internet, once purely a source of information has become a place where people meet to share their stories and experiences, a platform for discussion and debate, a source of entertainment and much more. Furthermore, the Web has several important marketing aspects that enable companies to boost their performance: 24 hours online; multimedia compatible; globally available; interactive; micromarketing compatible; integration ready. (Rowley, 2004, p. 26)

Communication across continents now takes seconds, not weeks. When consumers experience your brand through the web (positively or negatively) the impact is immediate. Nutella is a perfect example; when many passionate consumers began creating online communities around the brand the company intervened— preventing consumers from using the Nutella name and the company suffered as a result (Cova & Pace, 2006).

Kiani (1998) also presents a set of guidelines for advertising on the web; attract users by making it easy to find your site, engage their interests by creating communities or linking to other sites they will find valuable, ensure they return by constantly updating your content and keeping it „fresh”, learn their preferences by tracking their activity on your site, and relate to them by taking the information gathered to provide customized content.

A similar study conducted by Parsons, Zeisser and Waitman (1998) delves deeper into these fives guidelines, explains why they are important, the issues inherent in them, and how marketers began to implement them. The authors claim most marketers struggle in engaging their customers and present two key concepts marketers should understand in order to do so. First, understand that the web is an interactive medium and simply transferring content from traditional media will likely fail because it does not generate an interaction with the consumer. Secondly, in order to engage you must create or enable the creation of valuable content.

Parsons et al. (1998) expand on Kiani’s view on retaining consumers by arguing for a creation of switching costs through the development interactivity— where consumers invest more of their personal time and resources on a site and as a result making it more costly for them to switch to a competitor The authors also identify various ways to gather information on consumers (p.36). Since the amount of information marketers can acquire from the Internet can be overwhelming, the authors stress the importance of defining which is most important for them.

Winer (2009) highlights the opportunity of advertising on blogs, which he describes as a website built around a theme where the user shares their opinions and encourages others to discuss (p.111) by explaining that marketers pay to place a banner ad tailored to the theme of the blog. However he fails to explore the potential word-of-mouth value for companies in blogs.

Furthermore, blogs may also fit into the non-intrusive media category if they are created and maintained by the company to inform consumers and engage them in conversation. Lastly the author discusses ratings/recommendations as a form of user-generated content. Through the use of sites such as Amazon.com users can rate, and share their opinions of, products or vendors (Winer, 2009, p.111). This medium can be either beneficial or harmful for marketers as they have no control. Moreover, it illustrates the importance of word-of-mouth in the digital world.

Kwak, Lee, Park and Moon (2014) present an empirical study of Twitter and how information spreads across the service. The authors analyzed 41.7 million users, 1.47 billion social relations, 4,262 trending topics and 106 million tweets. During the research the authors noted a tendency on Twitter; contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people.

Twitter’s homophily can benefit businesses that establish their Twitter presence and start building a follower database. It enables companies to reach out to the right people and be sure that the information will be passed on and reach people with similar interests who could be potential clients. When looking deeper into how Twitter operates and spreads information the authors noted that any re-tweeted tweet reaches an average of 1000 users no matter the number of followers had by the original tweet.

Reaching a thousand potential customers by only one click is undoubtedly a valuable opportunity for businesses. The article presents a good description of how Twitter operates and how tweets reach masses. However the article, though valuable, is purely scientific and very limited as it does not address how the business world is making use of this potentially profitable tool.
III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The paper searches the various dimensions attached to the concept of digital marketing. It looks into some of the initiatives taken in India, and the opportunities ahead. This paper is a descriptive study, where examples are cited based on the references from some secondary material available and some from the personal experiences of the authors. The study suggests some measures that can help companies to improve their marketing strategies.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
The primary objective of taking up this study is to analyze various aspects of digital marketing in India, and to reveal the necessity of using digital marketing as a marketing strategy by the companies for the marketing of their product and services.

V. DIGITAL INDIA AND DIGITAL MARKETING
Digital India is an initiative by the Government of India to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improving online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity. It was launched on July 1, 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high speed internet networks. Digital India has three core components. These include:

- The creation of digital infrastructure
- Delivering services digitally
- Digital literacy

Impact of Digital India by 2019
- Broadband in 2.5 lakh villages, universal phone connectivity
- Net Zero Imports by 2020
- 400,000 Public Internet Access Points
- Wi-fi in 2.5 lakh schools, all universities; Public wi-fi hotspots for citizens
- Digital Inclusion: 1.7 Cr trained for IT, Telecom and Electronics Jobs
- Job creation: Direct 1.7 Cr. and Indirect at least 8.5 Cr.
- E-Governance & e-Services: Across government
- India to be leader in IT use in services health, education, banking
- Digitally empowered citizens public cloud, internet access

A two-way platform will be created where both the service providers and the consumers stand to benefit.

Hence, the main focus of Digital India is to make the people of India to be digital and therefore marketing companies should focus on Digital Marketing for marketing of their products and services.

VI. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND DIGITAL MARKETING
It cannot be denied that, the world is rapidly shifting from analogue to digital. People are consuming more and more digital content on a daily basis – on mobile phones, laptops, desktop computers at work, and more – and companies that have not yet recognized this in their marketing strategies need to adapt fast.

The fast development of communications technology in the past few spans is improving many aspects of our lives – how we search for information, how we travel and not at least how we buy products or services. Although shop-based retail is still preferred, but e-commerce or electronic commerce, namely the buying and selling of products and services exclusively through electronic channels, is preferred more by the customers in the present time, and it is assumed that in future the online selling and purchasing will be preferred more by the people.

Consumer Behavior is the study of individuals & group’s buying behavior. In present era due to the revolution in digital marketing the behavior of consumer is changing day to day basis so companies need to understand changing consumer behavior positively so that they can satisfy customer’s need & wants.

The old buying process AIDA model was the “old” model: a linear path from the first “contact” with brand to the final purchase act.

Today customers get in touch with brands in various situations - be it relaxed at home or in a hurry while travelling. They may live in a big city or in a small town where the next retailer is miles away the customer journey. People get in touch with brands on different “touch points”, analog and digital, during different times of the day.

Hence, as consumer buying behavior is changing with change in technology and era, the marketing strategy of the companies should also be changed and they should focus on digital marketing instead of traditional marketing techniques.

VII. DIGITAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL MARKETING
In today’s technology driven world, social networking sites have become an avenue where retailers can extend their marketing campaigns to a wider range of consumers. With the explosion of smart phones and other mobile devices it’s important for businesses across the world to adopt an effective mobile strategy.

Global Smartphone Sales is estimated to grow from 1.5 billion in 2015 to 1.7 billion by 2017, according to the latest report from Strategy Analytics. What is more interesting is that India will leapfrog US to become the second largest Smartphone market by 2017. China, India and US, together, will account for nearly 50 percent of global Smartphone market by 2017.
According to the latest report from TRAI mobile phone subscriber base in India recorded 6.71% YoY growth to 980.81 million users in Q2 2015. In the first half of 2015, the mobile subscriber base in India became stronger with 36.84% million new mobile phone users, which resulted in 6.72% growth compared to the same duration last year.

Similarly, other technologies such as Laptop, Personal Computers and other technologies are being used widely. The rapid evolution of digital media has created new opportunities and avenues for advertising and marketing. Fueled by the proliferation of devices to access digital media, this has led to the exponential growth of digital advertising.

Digital media is so pervasive that consumers have access to information any time and anywhere they want it. Days are gone when the messages people got about companies, products or services came from respective company and consisted of only what company wanted them to know. Digital media is an ever-growing source of entertainment, news, shopping and social interaction, and consumers are now exposed not just to what the company says about their brand, but what the media, friends, relatives, peers, etc., are saying as well. And they are more likely to believe them than company. People want brands they can trust, companies that know them, communications that are personalized and relevant, and offers tailored to their needs and preferences.

So on the basis of above discussed data the user of digital communication technology are increasing year by year in India and hence the companies have to focus on digital marketing strategy otherwise the will lack in competition.

VIII. INTERNET AND DIGITAL MARKETING

Internet has become an indispensable part everyone lives and has much more to offer in coming years. May it be research, education or business promotion in every field internet serves all need. So why not take help of this wizard for developing of the business.

The Internet and especially social media have changed how consumers and marketers communicate. The Internet has distinct characteristics such as:

- The ability to inexpensively store vast amounts of information at different virtual locations
- The availability of powerful and inexpensive means of searching, organizing, and disseminating such information
- Interactivity and the ability to provide information on demand
- The ability to serve as a transaction medium
- The ability to serve as a physical distribution medium for certain goods and services
- Relatively low entry and establishment costs for sellers.

When companies build their own business they need to take care of lots of issues related to its promotion amongst the audience. It has never been easy for an entrepreneur to achieve success without putting efforts in advertising. Developing the profile of a company can be a tedious job but with latest marketing trends companies can very easily propagate their business to a large number of customers. They can reach customers all over the world in no time. Making use of internet for business expansion gives them a platform to perform better than your competitors.

IX. IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL MARKETING

On the basis of above discussion we can summarize the importance of digital marketing to marketers as follows:

- Digital marketing is infinitely more affordable than traditional offline marketing methods. An email or social media campaign, for example, can transmit a marketing message to consumers for the merest fraction of the cost of a TV ad or print campaign, and potentially reach a wider audience.

- Conducting marketing digitally is the ease with which results can be tracked and monitored. Rather than conducting expensive customer research, companies can quickly view customer response rates and measure the success of their marketing campaign in real-time, enabling them to plan more effectively for the next one.

- It is easy to collect the feedback reports or number of readers instantly unlike the traditional media like T.V, radio or hoardings. In online advertising users can themselves search for any product and grab the information related to that product on any website and can give their feedback instantly. This eventually helps the entrepreneurs to upgrade themselves in a specific domain. Moreover you can make a long-lasting impact on your target viewers at a faster rate.

- It helps in promoting a business through digital medium like internet or mobile thus reaching millions of customers in a moment. Many small and large businesses are following the strategies of online marketing to endorse themselves globally. It includes tools like SEO, email, RSS, pay per click, blogging, instant messaging, social media, video streaming, podcasting and many more.

- Digital marketers monitor things like what is being viewed, how often and for how long, sales conversions, what content works and doesn’t work, etc. While the Internet is, perhaps, the channel most closely associated with digital marketing, others include wireless text messaging, mobile instant messaging, mobile apps, podcasts, electronic billboards, digital television and radio channels, etc.
• Digital marketing is affordable, target-able and measurable, and hence businesses do it and marketers love it.

X. CHALLENGES FACING DIGITAL MARKETERS
There are many benefits of using digital marketing platform to market the company’s products and services but there are some challenges that a marketer using the digital marketing strategy has to face. The challenges are as follows:

*Proliferation of digital channels. Consumers use multiple digital channels and a variety of devices that use different protocols, specifications and interfaces – and they interact with those devices in different ways and for different purposes.

*Intensifying competition. Digital channels are relatively cheap, compared with traditional media, making them within reach of practically every business of every size. As a result, it’s becoming a lot harder to capture consumers’ attention.

*Exploding data volumes. Consumers leave behind a huge trail of data in digital channels. It’s extremely difficult to get a handle on all that data, as well as find the right data within exploding data volumes that can help you make the right decisions.

XI. DIGITAL MARKETING RULES
Michael Silverstein (Boston Consulting Group Partner) says there are eight rules for converting customers into loyal customers who advocate your brand and urge others to enjoy your products. Successful companies capture the power of digital word-of-mouth advocacy through these 8 Rules.

1. Virtual relationships: The world works on 24/7. The consumers with the most disposable income have the least amount of time. But they have high-speed Internet lines at home and at work. And they want to buy what they want to buy when they want it.

2. People do Judge a Book by Its Cover: Consumers use their eyes in every purchase and they carry the image in their subconscious. Visual brilliance costs a lot, but its value is priceless. Your digital marketing must also be brilliant.

3. Show your customers what they want: Success requires curiosity and courage, instinct, and a taste for the jugular. It requires you to look beyond simple answers and impulsive consumer rejection (the customer does not always know what they want...we must show them). Digital marketing allows you to show them.

4. Focus on biggest fans: Research supports the “rule of 2-20-80-150.” The 2 percent of customers (apostles) are personally responsible for 20 percent of sales. However, when they advocate to friends and acquaintances they are responsible for 80 percent of sales (and up to 150 percent of a company’s profits). Companies often waste time generates losses chasing the remaining 20 percent of sales. In your digital marketing micro-focus on the 20%.

5. Welcome customer’s scorn: A complaint is a gift (according to Toyota). 'Complain once, let me fix it. Complain twice, shame on me. Complain three times, and I should be replaced'. When the complaints are really bad, listen and get ready to change. Also, find out not only what your customers really, really want, but also when and why they really want it. Digital engagement allows you to find out these things ASAP.

6. Employees as passionate disciples: Container Store calls this “man in the desert” selling... listening, helping, engaging, and suggesting. Passion equals knowledge. Knowledge equals solutions. Solutions translate into sales. It’s so simple but so infrequently exercised. Engage your employees in the digital marketing journey.

7. Take giant leaps: Continuous improvement, incremental advances, and consolidation never changed the world. To change the world, you must show foresight, fearlessness, and fortitude. Big wins require big dreams. Think big in your digital marketing.

8. Schismogenesis: The laws of schismogenesis, means that relationships are not stable. Brands are always moving—up, up, up or down, down, down. Therefore, companies must learn how to use quantitative metrics, track customers like the third leg of the P&L—revenues and profits, share of the properly defined universe, and advocacy. 'If you are not improving, you are in decline'. Digital marketing analytics must be fine-tuned and honed to get effective results.

Successful digital marketing is based on converting customers into loyal customers, who in turn advocate your brand, and urge others to enjoy your products or services.

XII. CONCLUSION
Research determined that retailers can increase awareness of their brand by being creative when engaging customers on social media sites. "As more shoppers are using social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn) and rely on them for marketing shopping decisions, promotion through these media has become important" (Shankar et al. 2011, 32). According to Curran et al. (2011), social media sites such as Facebook are better than other advertising avenues because it stores information on all its users thus ensuring marketing reaches a retailer’s specific target market. Social media sites are a great stage for retailers to create an experience...
and retailers can use information stored on social media sites to improve user experience with their brand.

It cannot be denied that the world is rapidly shifting from analogue to digital world. People are consuming more and more digital content on a daily basis and companies that have not yet recognized this in their marketing strategies need to adapt fast.

More people spend more time online in India every year, and the digital tools and sites they use play an ever-growing role in their lives. Smart marketers keep on top of the scale of change and ensure their marketing strategies and touchpoints mirror where the consumer is spending their time.

Different research, study and data shows that India is moving towards digitization very rapidly year by year, and the Indian government is also focusing on the complete digitization of the nation by launching the campaign Digital India. The objective of the Digital India is to make the people of India digital i.e; the people of India will be online. They can do anything from anywhere at any time using digital media.

So, there is a need to change the marketing strategy of various companies from traditional marketing to digital marketing. If the companies do not use the digital marketing platform to market their products and services then they will lack the competition that exist in a perfect competition market, and hence the future of the company cannot be assured and the company will go in loss. Now-days the customers purchase the products online. They easily get the information about the product and compare the products and order without going to a retail shop or a shopping mall. It shows that the consumers prefer buying online rather than going to retail shops and shopping malls.

So with change in the buying behavior of the customer the marketing companies have to change their marketing strategies, and should adopt Digital marketing platform for marketing of their products and services.

XIII. REFERENCES


